

# Duxbury Clipper

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## High 5 for boys' lacrosse

### Dragons win State title over Billerica

By Mike Halloran, Sports Editor

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He's lived in the shadow of his famous brother since he took up the game of lacrosse, but now Gus Quinzani has his own niche in the hallowed history of Duxbury High School lacrosse.



#### BOYS LACROSSE

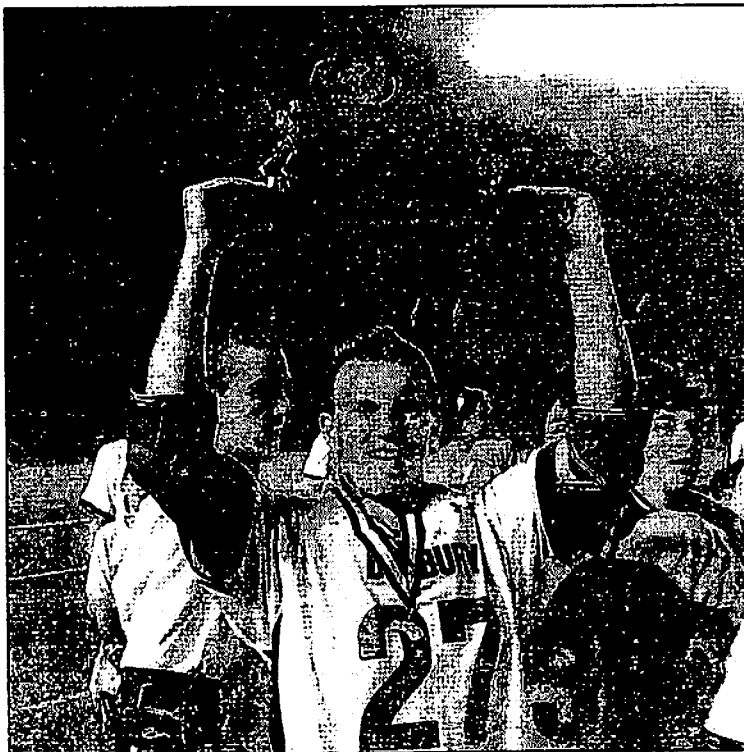
Duxbury 14 (OT)  
Billerica 13

Taking a pass from senior captain Scott Austin, Quinzani beat Billerica goaltender Pat O'Loughlin 56 seconds into sudden-death OT to give the Dragons a heart-stopping 14-13 win at Harvard Stadium on Wednesday night.

"Oh no, not again," said Quinzani, as he reminisced about last year's OT game with Billerica in the semifinals. "I wanted the game to end in regulation so we could show them we were the better team. They came out and worked so hard, and I don't think we were ready for that fast-paced tempo."

It is the fifth straight Division 1 lacrosse title for Duxbury, and the sixth in the last seven years, while also extending Duxbury's unbeaten streak to 90 games against Massachusetts' high school opponents.

"The streak is kind of surreal," said Duxbury Coach Chris Sweet. "We think about it, but we really don't. We al-



**THE DYNASTY CONTINUES:** Duxbury defenseman and senior captain Mark Murphy holds the MIAA Championship trophy.

ways know it's there. But every year it's a different group of kids and they feel they need to get it done. They don't want to be the ones who don't get it done and that is a driving force for them. Plus they are pretty good lacrosse players too."

This was one of the hardest fought wins in Duxbury history, as Billerica dominated the Dragons from the opening face-off in every aspect of the game, and left the field in shock after giving up Quinzani's goal in OT.

The Dragons came into the contest as the #1 seed, and had beaten #3-seeded Billerica

earlier in the season by an 11-10 score. But this time the Indians came out with fire in their eyes and were intent on giving the Dragons a dose of their own medicine.

While Duxbury has had a habit of surrendering the first goal, they weren't prepared for the ferocity with which Billerica started the game.

The contest was barely a minute old when midfielder Adam Foss beat Dan Buonagurio for a 1-0 lead, and the stadium crowd was in shock when Greg Melaugh took the ensuing face-off and raced right down the field seconds

later to make it 2-0.

One trademark of the Dragons is that they rarely panic, and in a 1:10 span Quinzani had them back in the game with a pair of goals to make it 2-2.

Duxbury's euphoria was short-lived, as Melaugh again controlled the face-off and took just six seconds to race downfield and beat Buonagurio to regain the lead at 3-2.

The Duxbury defense was being severely tested early and often, and allowed another easy goal when Ross Murphy took a 20-yard pass in the slot and was all alone to make it 4-2 with 6:22 left in the quarter.

The Dragons needed to kill Billerica's momentum, and Hakeem Lecky took matters into his own hands, stealing a pass in the defensive end and going the full length of the field to beat O'Loughlin and cut the lead to 4-3.

Austin saw to it that the Dragons stayed close when he pulled off one of his patented behind-the-net moves and came out front to beat O'Loughlin over his shoulder and tie the game at 4-4 after one quarter.

Austin tallied his second goal of the game just 23 seconds into the second quarter for one of Duxbury's few leads, but after that it was all downhill for the Dragons over the next five minutes.

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A bad clearing pass, an uncovered attack in the slot, and a sloppy Duxbury possession led to three straight Billerica goals and a 7-5 lead.

Quinzani scored his third of the half on a pass from Derek Sweet to make it 7-6 with 4:33 to go, and Sweet matched a Foss goal with 1:03 remaining that left the Dragons in the unfamiliar role of trailing at halftime, 8-7.

There was little doubt that the Indians were getting the better of the Dragons, but the defending champs never let their fired-up opponent get too far away in the wild first-half action.

A beautiful solo effort by junior Quinn Cully tied the game at 8-8 less than three

minutes into the second half, but the pace of the game slowed dramatically, as Billerica held on to the ball for close to three minutes during which Tim Canniff and Grant Whiteway gave them a two-goal lead.

Austin prevented a three-goal Billerica margin by scoring with 1:37 to go, and Cully pulled the Dragons even in the first minute of the fourth quarter with another of his solo efforts from behind the net.

A pair of Billerica goals had the Dragons trailing 12-10 with 7:51 showing on the clock, and the Duxbury faithful was surely thinking the end of Duxbury's reign was close at hand.

But Austin once again kept Duxbury in the game when he

pounced on the rebound of an O'Loughlin save and scooped it in the net to cut the deficit to 12-11.

With every possession now critical, the Dragons had a splendid opportunity with a man-up situation and 6:16 to go, but squandered it with a bad pass that was picked off by O'Loughlin and prompted an Indian timeout.

The mistake never came back to haunt Duxbury, as the Dragons returned the favor by stealing a Billerica pass and forcing a man-up situation with 2:11 left in the game.

Forty-one seconds later Sweet tied the game at 12-12 when he made a great cut through the slot and redirected a Quinzani pass, raising his arms in jubilation and exhorting the Duxbury crowd to spur them onto victory.

"Scott and Derek got it done all year long," said Sweet. "Tonight they battled and hustled and left everything on the field. They were able to score goals in dramatic fashion tonight when we needed it the most."

Billerica's dominance on face-offs was crucial once again, but Buonagurio came up with a big save when the Indians raced into the zone.

Duxbury would throw away a golden scoring opportunity with 55 seconds left in the game, but defenseman Dan May came up with a huge defensive play down the left sideline and moved the ball up field to Sweet, who sent the



**ROUGH NIGHT:** Duxbury's Scott Austin takes the brunt of this collision, but he was happy to do it in the Dragon's 14-13 OT win over Billerica.

Stadium crowd into a frenzy when he gave the Dragons a 13-12 lead with 38 seconds to go.

Face-off possession was crucial. But as had been the case all night long, the Indians got the ball.

After calling a timeout to discuss their options, Billerica's Jeff Scarfo went solo from the top of the box and beat Buonagurio with a bouncer and 21 seconds left in regulation.

Billerica's striking power off the face-off had to be on Duxbury's mind, but the Dragons picked a good time to get possession and called a timeout. When they came out of the break, they set up Lecky on the perimeter and had him circle the net. As he went to

the top of the box, he fired on O'Loughlin, who had a clear view of the shot, forcing the game into OT.

"We were down a lot of the time and most teams would have folded. But these guys believe in themselves and they know just to keep working hard. Hard work is what got these guys here and hard work is what won this for them," said Sweet.

The game was a fitting ending to the high school careers of senior captains Craig Sullivan, Mark Murphy, and Austin, along with classmates Sweet, Matt Landry, Nick Beattie, Will Ricciardi, Nick Cusick, Neil O'Connor, Grant Marston, Dane Molina, Elwin McCarthy, and May.



**SWEET DREAMS:** Coach Chris Sweet congratulates Gus Quinzani on his game-winning goal.

Photos by Mike Halloran